

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** November 29, 2012

**Meeting No.:** 157

**Project:** Central Avenue Hotel

**Phase:** Schematic

**Location:** 511 S. Central Avenue

---

**PRESENTATION:**

Ken Finklestein, representing Englewood Development of Washington DC briefly described the project and introduced Rob Uhrin, director of Cooper Carry Architects (Atlanta) hospitality group along with architect Andrea Schaub of Cooper Carry's Alexandria studio to describe it in detail.

The 8 storey building was described as a mixed use project, located at the corners of Central Avenue, Fleet Street and South Eden Street, with 14-15,000 sq. ft of retail space plus lobby functions on the ground floor below one level of structured parking and 6 floors of upscale specialty hotel of 280 rooms. Two 2-3 level appendages are planned at the far ends of the L-shaped taller building along its Central Avenue and Eden Streets facades. The Central Avenue component accommodates the ramp to the parking level with meeting rooms above and the Eden Street component accommodates the service bays, parking and one floor of hotel rooms. Two specifically predetermined design motifs are employed as recognizable visual branding of the selected hotel chain (not named at this time). Those two elements are the projecting metal and glass entrance canopy and the projecting and sloping signature roof form.

The material choices were indicated as glass, red brick and precast concrete panels with cloth awnings along the retail storefronts.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:**

The Panel welcomed this first presentation of the plans for the proposed hotel and generally agreed with the placement, scale and organization of the project. However, there were several comments suggesting that additional study was warranted to address potential challenges of the current design:

1. **Corner Emphasis** – The Panel felt that the treatment of the corner of Central and Fleet could be stronger and more celebratory. Concern was voiced that the hotel's entrance or public spaces are too far removed from this important location relinquishing the corner identity to the quality of a future retail tenant rather than the hotel. More attention to overall streetscape.
2. **Ground level Retail** - If an upscale restaurant is located on this corner as suggested, there is considerable concern that the lack of amenity – setbacks, landscaping and outdoor seating creates and overly hard edged environment not in keeping with the kind of active pedestrian streetscape that is becoming a trademark of this new district. Additionally suggestions were made that the awnings proposed be restudied to provide more overhead cover and a more intimate relationship with the storefronts.

3. **Integration of Design elements** - There was general concern that the major identity forms employed– the entrance and its canopy, the corner treatment, the projecting fin and the signature sloping rooftop element were all acting too independently. The Panel suggested these elements be restudied in an attempt to integrate them more fully into a clearer and stronger reading of entrance, corner and top.
4. **Low level appendages** -There was general agreement that the Central Avenue 2-3 level appendage should be simplified, be less “historic” and made more like the building itself.
5. **Materiality** -There was some concern that more creativity be introduced into the selection of the dominate coloration and materials for the building- consider colors other than red brick for instance, like greys, ironspot or buff bricks. Consider also that metal panel may be considered appropriate for certain expressions of the fin and rooftop elements.

**PANEL ACTION:**

Recommend approval of Schematics with further study as noted above.

---

**Attending:** Ken Finklestein – Englewood Development  
Rob Uhrin, Andrea Schaub - Cooper Carry Architects  
Tommy Eckes – Morris & Richie Associates  
Richard Manekin, Doug Schmidt – Chesapeake Real Estate  
Jack Lambert – BBJ  
Amy Landsman – B’More Media  
Steve Kilar – Baltimore Sun

Ms Eig, Messrs. Bowden\*and Burns - UDARP Panel

Bimal Devkota, Jamie McDonald, Michael Wilmore – DOT

Director Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa, Martin French, Tamara Woods –Planning Department